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ABSTRACT

Noting that increasing contact between people of different cultures heightens the need for clarity and understanding of the ethical responsibilities and consequences of communication, this paper presents Washington State's Essential Academic Learning Requirements in communication. Four charts outline standards and benchmarks regarding: (1) using listening and observation skills to gain understanding; (2) communicating ideas clearly and effectively; (3) using communication strategies and skills to work effectively with others; and (4) analyzing and evaluating the effectiveness of formal and informal communication. The four charts are divided into benchmarks for grade 4, 7, and 10. (SC)

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The Essential Academic Learning Requirements in Communication.

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Communication

INTRODUCTION TO COMMUNICATION

Communication for Today and Tomorrow - The information age and the increasing contact between people of different cultures make communication more important than ever before. These global realities heighten the need for clarity and an understanding of the ethical responsibilities and consequences of communication. As education researcher Ernest Boyer noted, "It should be remembered that we speak more than we write. Throughout our lives we judge others, and we ourselves are judged, by what we say and how we speak. The information age raises to new levels of urgency the need for all students to be proficient in the use of the spoken as well as the written word." (1983)

What Is Communication? - Communication is defined as a process by which we assign and convey meaning in an attempt to create shared understanding. This process requires a vast repertoire of skills in intrapersonal and interpersonal processing, listening, observing, speaking, questioning, analyzing, and evaluating. Use of these processes is developmental and transfers to all areas of life: home, school, community, work, and beyond. It is through communication that collaboration and cooperation occur.

Fundamental Beliefs About Curriculum and Assessment - If there is one unifying theme that crosses all disciplines, it is communication. Communication is our window to basic literacy and academic excellence. Reaching levels of excellence and accuracy of expression mandate mastery of formal English. These are the capabilities that cultivate the potential in each student and the possibilities for our future.

The Essential Academic Learning Requirements in

COMMUNICATION

1. **The student uses listening and observation skills to gain understanding.**

   To meet this standard, the student will:

   1.1 focus attention

   1.2 listen and observe to gain and interpret information

   1.3 check for understanding by asking questions and paraphrasing

2. **The student communicates ideas clearly and effectively.**

   To meet this standard, the student will:

   2.1 communicate clearly to a range of audiences for different purposes

   2.2 develop content and ideas
   develop a topic or theme; organize thoughts around a clear beginning, middle, and end; use transitional sentences and phrases to connect related ideas; speak coherently and compellingly

   2.3 use effective delivery
   adjust speaking strategies for a variety of audiences and purposes by varying tone, pitch, and pace of speech to create effect and aid communication

   2.4 use effective language and style
   use language that is grammatically correct, precise, engaging and well-suited to topic, audience, and purpose

   2.5 effectively use action, sound, and/or images to support presentations

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3. **The student uses communication strategies and skills to work effectively with others.**

   To meet this standard, the student will:

   3.1 use language to interact effectively and responsibly with others

   3.2 work cooperatively as a member of a group

   3.3 seek agreement and solutions through discussion

4. **The student analyzes and evaluates the effectiveness of formal and informal communication.**

   To meet this standard, the student will:

   4.1 assess strengths and need for improvement
   assess own and others' communication strengths and needs and set goals for improvement

   4.2 seek and offer feedback
   seek and use feedback to improve communication; offer suggestions and comments to others

   4.3 analyze mass communication

   4.4 analyze how communication is used in career settings

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1. The student uses listening and observation skills to gain understanding.

To meet this standard, the student will:

BENCHMARK 1 - GRADE 4	BENCHMARK 2 - GRADE 7	BENCHMARK 3 - GRADE 10
1.1 focus attention		
pay attention while others are talking	give evidence of paying attention *such as nodding, maintaining eye contact, taking notes, and asking relevant questions*	use attention level appropriate for particular circumstances and contexts
pay attention to oral stories, instructions, reports, assemblies, and daily announcements	pay attention and respond appropriately in particular contexts *such as social interactions and receiving information*	analyze and reflect on ideas while paying attention and listening in a variety of situations
1.2 listen and observe to gain and interpret information		
recognize non-verbal communication	identify the relationship between verbal and non-verbal communication	interpret and draw inferences from verbal and non-verbal communication
identify visual information *such as from a science experiment*	identify visual information and/or people's behaviors *such as in a math activity or an ethnographic study*	draw inferences based on visual information and/or people's behaviors
interpret visual texts *such as illustrations, comics, and videos*	interpret and discuss relationships among ideas, information, and events in visual texts *such as illustrations, art, dance, graphs, and diagrams*	explore different perspectives on complex issues through viewing a range of visual texts
listen for, identify, and explain: • main ideas • details • fact vs. opinion • meaning	listen for, identify and explain: • important as well as extraneous details • relationships in stories, poems, etc. • pitch, intensity, and intonation	listen for, identify and explain: • information vs. persuasion • inferences • emotive rhetoric vs. reasoned arguments
demonstrate listening strategies for following instructions	demonstrate listening strategies for gaining information	use a variety of effective listening strategies
1.3 check for understanding by asking questions and paraphrasing		
ask questions to clarify content and meaning including who, what, why, when, where, and how	ask questions to clarify content and meaning in a variety of contexts and situations	ask questions to interpret and evaluate oral and visual contexts based on information from a variety of sources
paraphrase information	paraphrase conversations and information	paraphrase to expand and refine understanding
	ask questions to verify judgments and inferences	make judgments and inferences
select information and give opinions	construct hypotheses	ask questions to refine and verify hypotheses

2. The student communicates ideas clearly and effectively.

To meet this standard, the student will:

BENCHMARK 1 - GRADE 4	BENCHMARK 2 - GRADE 7	BENCHMARK 3 - GRADE 10
2.1 communicate clearly to a range of audiences for different purposes		
communicate to teacher, small group, and class, *for example, by tutoring or giving reports*	communicate with an expanding range of audiences *such as community members and voice-mail*	communicate effectively with different audiences
show beginning awareness of the needs of an audience	determine needs of an audience and make limited adjustments in content and technique	make well-chosen and varied connections between own purposes and audience interests and needs
	communicate for a range of purposes *for example, to inform, explain, persuade, or entertain*	communicate for a broad range of purposes, *for example, to reflect, make inferences, interview, and influence*
use narrative and descriptive forms of speech	communicate using different forms of oral presentation *such as reports or drama*	identify and use different forms of oral presentation
2.2 develop content and ideas		
choose content which relates to topic	choose content appropriate to own purposes and interests and needs of an audience	use a variety of content to convey messages to a chosen audience
select material from readily available sources	select and document relevant material from a variety of sources	access and use a variety of primary and secondary sources
organize information in a sequential pattern (beginning, middle, end) using simple transitions	organize information with a clear sequencing of ideas and transitions	create a comprehensive and organized presentation with a clear sequencing of ideas and transitions
describe ideas in concrete terms	develop a rational argument	make a well reasoned, insightful presentation supported by related details
2.3 use effective delivery		
speak at a volume and rate that enables others to follow	speak at a volume and pace appropriate to the situation	vary tone, pitch, and pace of speech to create effect and aid communication
project voice well	➡ project voice well	➡ project voice well
speak fluently and expressively to the class	appeal to the interests of the audience	use logic, arguments, or appeals to persuade others
use good posture and eye contact	➡ use good posture and eye contact	➡ use good posture and eye contact
begin to use facial expression and body language to convey a message or enhance an oral presentation	use facial expression and body language to heighten and emphasize message	skillfully use facial expression, body movement, and gestures to convey tone and mood appropriate to the audience and message

Communication - Essential Academic Learning Requirement 2 (Continued)

BENCHMARK 1 - GRADE 4	BENCHMARK 2 - GRADE 7	BENCHMARK 3 - GRADE 10
2.4 use effective language and style		
speak using standard grammar	➡ speak using standard grammar	➡ speak using standard grammar
use complete sentences	use complex sentences	use a variety of sentence structures
use age-appropriate vocabulary	use a range of vocabulary related to a particular topic	use language that is interesting and well suited to the topic and audience
use words and illustrations *such as pictures or charts* to create an effective presentation	use language well-suited to the chosen audience	develop effective voice for the audience and purpose
2.5 effectively use action, sound, and/or images to support presentations		
experiment with a variety of media and resources to convey a message or enhance an oral presentation	use a variety of media to illustrate and support ideas	communicate messages through oral, artistic, graphic, and/or multimedia presentation
	use available technology as a presentation tool	demonstrate sophisticated use of available technology to present ideas and concepts

3. **The student uses communication strategies and skills to work effectively with others.**

To meet this standard, the student will:

BENCHMARK 1 - GRADE 4	BENCHMARK 2 - GRADE 7	BENCHMARK 3 - GRADE 10
3.1 use language to interact effectively and responsibly with others		
demonstrate conversation skills, *for example, entering in, taking turns, responding to others' remarks, and closing a conversation*	use language to interact with others, *for example, to greet people, compliment, give encouragement, or express feelings*	use language to influence others, *for example, to persuade, convince, correct, or disagree*
distinguish between types of speech *such as a chat, a warning, or a joke*	respond to different types of speech and audiences	use appropriate humor, slang, idioms, and conversational styles with both peers and adults
use language that is respectful of others feelings and rights	use language that is free from stereotyping, bias, libel, slander, or harassment	use language that is accurate and equitable
show awareness of possible difficulties when communicating cross-culturally	identify cultural assumptions and perspectives	show awareness of cultural premises, assumptions, and world views in order to effectively communicate cross-culturally
3.2 work cooperatively as a member of a group		
assume a variety of assigned roles within a group to perform a task	assume roles or tasks within a group to perform a task	participate in a group to write, work toward consensus, propose solutions, or achieve results
contribute to group with ideas and effort	contribute to group with suggestions, research, and effort	make individual contribution to the group and extend the contribution of others
respect others' feelings and right to participate in a group	demonstrate respect for others' opinions by allowing time for responses	encourage group members to offer ideas and points of view
3.3 seek agreement and solutions through discussion		
identify and share ideas and points of view	acknowledge others' ideas and points of view; identify similarities and differences	respect that a solution may require honoring other points of view
	check for understanding in group interactions	analyze group interaction to anticipate consequences
accept responsibility for personal actions	contribute responsibly to group efforts	accept accountability for group results
formulate ideas and identify possible alternatives	choose a position and develop a plan of action	advocate, implement, and evaluate a plan
suggest solutions and initiate action	define challenges and encourage others to action	influence by encouraging and supporting others to act independently

COMMUNICATIONS ESSENTIAL ACADEMIC LEARNING REQUIREMENTS

1. The student analyzes and evaluates the effectiveness of formal and informal communication.

To meet this standard, the student will:

BENCHMARK 1 - GRADE 4	BENCHMARK 2 - GRADE 7	BENCHMARK 3 - GRADE 10
4.1 assess strengths and need for improvement		
use established criteria to evaluate and improve one's own and others' presentations	establish and apply criteria for evaluating one's own and others' presentations	defend choices to deviate from established criteria
	know the qualities that make a presentation effective	use one's own and established criteria to improve presentations
	evaluate excellent presentations to improve own work	assess own strengths and weaknesses as a presenter
4.2 seek and offer feedback		
offer feedback on others' presentations	with guidance, offer feedback on others' presentations with regard to content and organization	independently offer specific feedback on others' presentations with regard to content, design, delivery skills, word choice, and conventions
accept and apply feedback on own presentation when appropriate	accept feedback when appropriate and revise own presentation	seek, evaluate, accept, and apply feedback
4.3 analyze mass communication		
identify various forms of mass communication ***such as magazines, television, newspapers, and the internet;*** identify messages in simple advertisements	identify and evaluate techniques used in mass communication ***such as name calling, celebrity appeal, and identification with the audience***	identify and evaluate complex techniques used in mass communications ***such as generalization, appeal to popularity, and appeal to emotion***
identify fact, opinion, and assumptions in mass communication	identify and explain the uses and impact of fact, opinion, bias, etc. in mass communication	analyze and explain the effectiveness of methods used in mass communication
understand that all media is produced from a point of view and with a set of assumptions	identify the accuracy, point of view, and assumptions of media	analyze and interpret the influence of media sources
4.4 analyze how communication is used in career settings		
identify different ways people communicate in the workplace, ***for example, telephone, e-mail, or formal presentations***	identify different communication techniques used in a variety of career settings ***such as to persuade, inform, or instruct***	determine effective communication techniques for an occupational/career field of interest